



## Bonton Village @ Lake Highlands

City of Dallas  
Economic Development Committee  
June 1, 2020







Daron Babcock  
*Founder, Executive Director*

What started as a garden in one of the city's most impoverished neighborhoods in southern Dallas has grown into a place that attracts visitors from around the world who desire to learn more about how Bonton Farms restores lives, creates jobs and ignites hope for the most vulnerable people in our city.

Recognized as one of the city's most respected nonprofit organizations, Bonton Farms has created a model that is successfully assisting people to advance from various levels of suffering and struggle to higher levels of independence and dignity, while helping to bring families back together and restoring relationships.

With approximately 325,000 residents living in poverty, an increase of 119% since 2016 in the number of unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness, and countless new people losing jobs and housing daily because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dallas desperately needs an innovative and replicable solution that will provide them with the resources to recover.

**Bonton Village @ Lake Highlands** aims to create a community asset and unique ecosystem focused on relationships that addresses core human needs and provides customized pathways for our most disadvantaged residents to reach their potential.

An urban farm, a farm-to-table café, a workforce innovation hub, corporate training facilities and low-cost housing would be located at one site to help people build job skills and secure long-term employment opportunities to become self-sufficient. Wraparound services would be available to residents who suffer from chemical dependency, mental illness or other health-related issues.

**Bonton Village @ Lake Highlands** would provide people experiencing homelessness with opportunities for meaningful work and housing, while creating a sense of community for residents that is connected to and integrated with the surrounding neighborhoods.



# Organization overview

Bonton village @  
Lake Highlands

## Mission statement

An entrepreneurial and agricultural intervention to restore lives, create jobs and ignite hope

## Short-term goals



- Develop urban farm, café, retail, workforce innovation hub and tiny homes to provide jobs, housing and healing to people in need
- Provide people experiencing homelessness with recovery services and programs
- Create an environment where 100% of participants are housed, employed, healthy and safe

## Long-term goals



- Establish model for economic development, housing and employment that can be replicated
- Create self-sustaining operations

## Vision

Operate an ecosystem of opportunity and dignity that supports people to reach their full potential



# On-site services

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- Life skills
- Healthcare services
- Health/nutrition counseling & education
- Work skills
- Entrepreneurship
- Gardening classes
- Professional trauma counseling
- Personal financial management classes
- Parenting classes
- Conflict resolution



- Basic computer training
- Legal services
- Emotional development
- Recovery classes & groups
- Spiritual development
- Reading classes & groups
- Résumé development
- Cooking classes
- Exercise classes (yoga, walking, parcourse, etc.)
- Art classes

*\*More will be added as the project moves forward.*

# Seven human essentials

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## Economy Building

We create social enterprises that provide paid internships for people not yet prepared to enter the workforce and offer full-time jobs for those needing an opportunity for a fresh start. This provides a dignified place to work while giving the space and support for them to work through whatever additional barriers they may have.

## Health & Wellness

People must be healthy and well to flourish. For us, this encompasses a holistic approach of addressing the needs of mind, body and spirit, including licensed trauma counseling, healthcare services, nutritional counseling, etc.

## Education

When helping those trying to overcome extraordinarily difficult situations, education can mean a lot of things—everything from budgeting, how to change an air filter, what it means to be a father and everything in between. If it is an obstacle to becoming who you desire to be, we provide a way to learn it.

## Safe & Affordable

Without a safe place to lay your head at night, the rest of life becomes seemingly impossible to navigate.

## Community Building

We were hardwired for community. Oftentimes, people experience homelessness because they have lost their sense of belonging and community. We have a healing journey that leads to community, and we intentionally seek to build healthy forms of community in all we do.

## Transportation

We live in a big city that is spread out over many miles. Connecting those we serve to the people, places and things they need is an important part of rebuilding a life.

## Access to Fair Credit

The lack of access to fair credit is a tremendous barrier for those trying to get back on their feet. Whether your car battery died or some other unplanned expense causes you to fall short, access to fair credit can be a significant determining factor in one's ability to stay the course.

# City of refuge

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City of Refuge (COR) is a collaborative environment that helps individuals and families transition out of crisis into stability. In the most dangerous neighborhood in Atlanta, City of Refuge has brought partners together under one roof to deliver high-quality job training, financial literacy, education, healthcare, housing and other services to empower the marginalized to thrive. Its mission is rooted in getting to the hearts of people first and then building the necessary infrastructure needed to provide sustainability.

City of Refuge-Atlanta has strong partners like NAPA Auto Parts, Chick-fil-A, Delta Airlines and others that have expressed interest in expanding the COR model to Dallas. This level of partnership creates both a uniqueness and sustainability to continue our goal of providing hope to an underserved population.



Mike Reinsel

*CEO, COR-Dallas*

- The City Council in May 2019 was presented with a list of three city-owned properties for consideration to build housing for residents experiencing homelessness. The only site able to accommodate more than eight housing units was 12000 Greenville Ave., a 12-acre parcel in District 10 that is currently owned by Dallas Water Utilities (DWU).
- Bonton Farms is requesting an option agreement on the site that would identify terms tied to conveyance of the majority of the property and a long-term lease agreement on part of the site, which has been identified by DWU for future use, at below-market values. The City would retain ownership of the land if Bonton Farms does not meet contractual milestones, including, but not limited to, private fundraising goals and construction timelines.
- The Economic Development and Housing Committee was briefed in April 2019 about staff's recommendation to add a land transfer program to the Comprehensive Housing Policy. The presentation included this language:

Pursuant to Texas Local Government Code Section 253.010, the city may: 1) sell land acquired by the city to a non-profit entity for the development of low-income housing, and 2) may sell the land at below market prices.



# City partnership request

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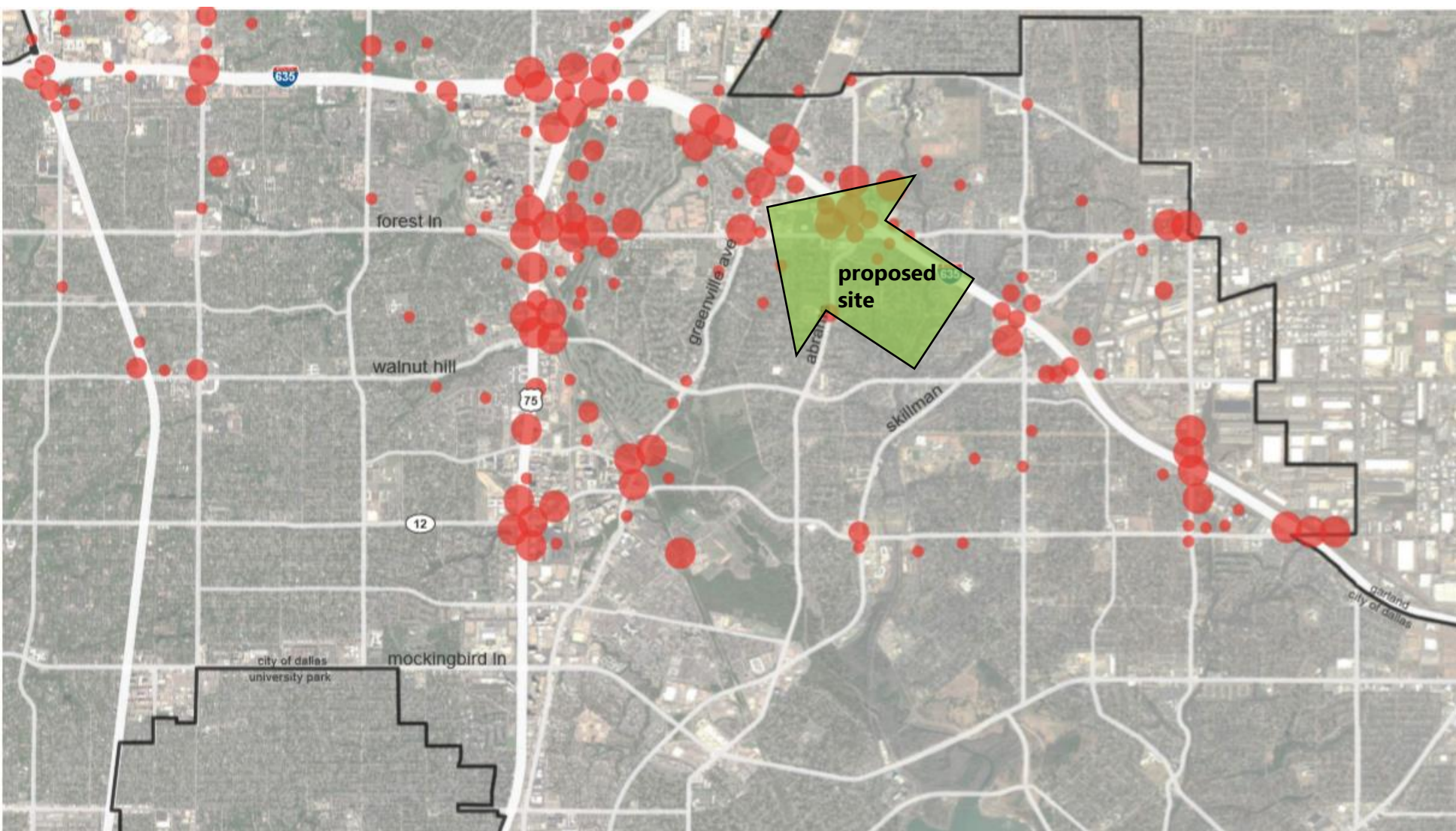
Bonton Farms plans to ask the Council at a later date to consider:

- A zoning change that would allow chickens and goats to live on-site.
- The disbursement of various City funds to fill an expected capital funding gap.
  - Potential sources could include discretionary funds allocated to District 10 from prior bond programs, federal funding from the CARES Act, and the Chapter 380 Economic Development Grant program.



# Homeless encampment map

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A more comprehensive map is being developed that will include DART routes, grocery stores and other community assets.

Source: OurCalling



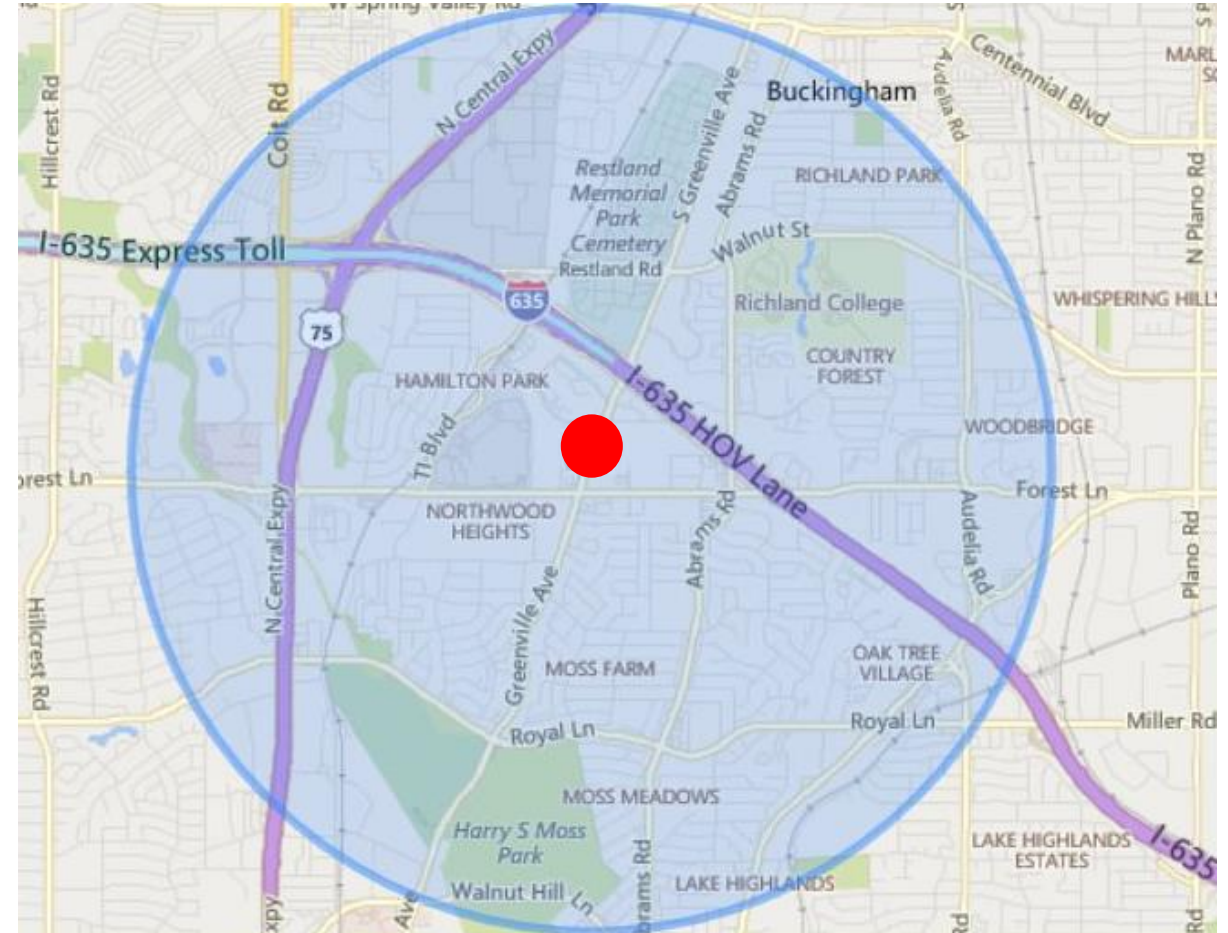
# TARGET AREA AND POPULATION

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## BONTON VILLAGE @ LAKE HIGHLANDS

would target single adults experiencing homelessness within a two-mile radius of 12000 Greenville Ave. who:

- Express a desire and are physically able to obtain and retain employment and housing.
- Agree to obey community rules, including, but not limited to, passing random drug tests, paying rent on time and participating in a recovery program.
- Are not a registered sex offender and/or have not been convicted of a violent felony.



Red dot = site

Blue circle = two-mile radius



# Site master plan

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# Project renderings

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# Proposed Capital COSTS & ANNUAL budgets

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30,000 sq. ft. of  
commercial space

**\$6M**



120 tiny homes

**\$5M**



farm, soft costs,  
contingency, misc.

**\$4M**



total

**\$15M**

	2020 (9 mo.)	2021	2022	2023
revenue	\$700,000	\$9,000,000	\$6,200,000	\$5,800,000
Operating expenses	\$276,255	\$1,357,940	\$1,697,240	\$2,262,840
Capital expenses	\$210,000	\$7,740,000	\$3,640,000	\$3,620,000
Ending cash	\$213,745	\$115,805	\$978,565	\$895,725



# Key metrics

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- Number of people provided with referrals, coordinated assessments, behavioral and primary healthcare, and housing placements
- Number of people who are employed, participate in each program, pay rent on time, and remain housed and employed after leaving the village
- Number of days per person spent in each housing phase and average number of days per person spent living on-site

*\*Additional metrics will be developed and implemented as the project moves forward.*

# Community outreach and support

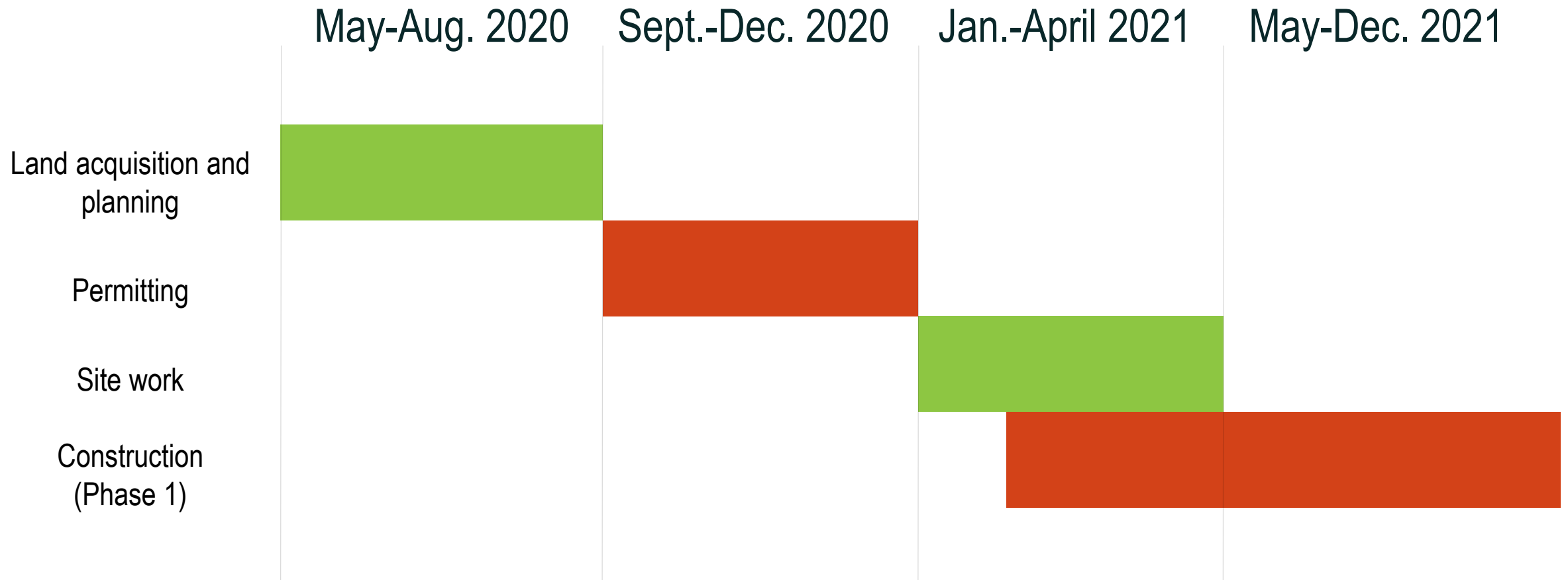
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- Bonton Farms is committed to hosting several community meetings to solicit feedback from residents and stakeholders. We take responsibility for communicating our plans to the public with complete transparency.
- The project has unanimous support from Bonton Farms Board of Directors.
- The first public meeting will be scheduled in District 10 within one month of Council's approval of the option agreement.



# Projected schedule

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**January 2022: Phase 1 opens**  
wraparound services)

(30 tiny homes, farm, café, coffee house,



